

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 2nd May 1903.

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ASSAM PAPERS.

Nil.

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

The *Roznama-i-Mukaddas Hablul Mateen* [Calcutta] of the 20th April says that Russia intends to put pressure upon the Amir in order to compel him to grant her trade concessions in his territory. Russia's pressure will totally annihilate the existence of the Amir if he is not supported by some other Power. The Amir ought to fill some of his important military head-quarters, such as Hazara and Helmund, with English troops.

ROZNAMA-I-MUKADDAS
HABLUL MATEEN,
April 20th, 1903.

2. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 21st April says:—

The arrest and confinement of Colonel Yate in Afghanistan.

The Amir of Afghanistan, who is powerful solely because he gets 18 lakhs of rupees every year from our Emperor, who is under the absolute protection of the British lion, and who is fostered and maintained by the favour of the world-conquering British Raj, has not hesitated to confine in his prison Colonel Yate, a Commander of His Majesty's forces on the North-Western frontier. The most unexpected has now come to pass—what was not seen before has now been presented before the eyes of men. Ruler of Afghanistan! think once how your action resembles that of a grasshopper confronting a destructive fire! Cast once your eyes back on past history! Think how like a fool you have entered upon a reprehensible course of action!

BUKDWAN SANJIVANI,
April 21st, 1903.

It cannot be held that Colonel Yate's mistake amounted to a serious offence. It was at first reported that Colonel Yate had entered Afghan territories in order to take a photograph of a certain fort, and had taken the necessary instruments with him; since then, however, it has transpired that he had no instruments with him, but only some servants and a few dogs.

Lo! there stands the sharp-toothed Bear behind the Amir! There the glimmer of the Bear's teeth is visible! Like the illusory deer in the *Ramayana*, the Amir has been sent out on his errand by the Royal Bear, who is awaiting opportunities to achieve his purpose. The powerful and wise British Government, however, fully knows all the wily and diplomatic ways of Russia. Lord Kitchener is just now in the frontier territory, and there is no need for apprehension. But nobody will say that the Amir has conducted himself as a friend and ally. It strikes us that the Governor of Candahar has committed this improper act without the Amir's consent, and will very probably be censured by His Highness for his recklessness.

3. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 22nd April says that his crossing the frontier is not the true reason of Colonel Yate's detention in Chaman fort by the Afghan Commander. English and Afghan military officers used before this to meet on friendly terms on the spot where the Colonel was arrested, and there was no manifestation of ill-feeling on such occasions. The fact is that the true reason of the Colonel's arrest and detention has not yet transpired. For a good many reasons the writer cannot believe that Afghanistan is destined to enjoy peace for any length of time. Incidents like the above may prove to be some of the causes which will destroy her peace.

SRI SRI VISHNU-
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
April 22nd, 1903.

4. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th April has the following:—

Colonel Yate's detention and the Afghan situation.

Colonel Yate is still in detention. In the meantime the situation is daily becoming graver. The Government of India wanted to send some English books to the Colonel in his solitary prison, but the Afghan Commander did not permit it. The other day, another European was riding on horseback on English ground on the Quetta frontier, when he was shot at by an Afghan soldier. Fortunately, the shot did not hit its mark.

BANGAVASI,
April 25th, 1903.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

5. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 13th April has the following:—The clerk of the Sub-Registry office at Chhagalnaia in the Noakhali district lives in his quarters in the office premises. One day a little after nightfall

Lawless acts in the Noakhali district.

SUHRID,
April 13th, 1903.

he was, as usual, sitting with friends in the outer room, when a Muhammadan constable, named Abdul Aziz, entered the inner apartment, and caught hold of his young wife. The frightened lady gave out loud shrieks, when some people came in and the ruffian escaped. The man was subsequently identified by the lady and is now awaiting his trial.

One night three Muhammadans, named Alibaksh, Kamaruddi and Abdul, entered the inner apartment of the house of Chandra Kumar Chakravarti, of village Khandakarpur within the jurisdiction of the Lakshipur thana, for the purpose of kidnapping his young wife, aged 15 or 16 years. Chandra Kumar offered resistance. The ruffians fell upon him and caused him grievous hurt. He was removed to hospital where he died in a few days.

Now, the result of a trial in our courts depends on the evidence which is placed before them. Very few people have the courage to speak the truth against these ruffians for fear of revenge; and evidence, considered sufficient for a conviction, is not always forthcoming. Cannot anything be done in this respect by appointing detectives?

SUHRID.
April 13th, 1903.

6. The same paper says that in spite of the recent reduction of the salt-tax, salt is being sold at Noakhali at Rs. 4-6 per maund—two annas per seer. Cannot the police enquire why this is so?

BIKAS,
April 21st, 1903.

7. The *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 21st April says:—The case brought against Babu Sri Charan Mukhopadhyaya, daroga of the Gorenadi thana, and Babu Shashi Bhushan Dutt, a zamindar of Batajorh, and others by a horse-dealer of Faridpur, is likely to be withdrawn by the complainant. There is nothing to be said in regard to Shashi Babu and others; but the proposal of a compromise out of Court as regards the charge against Sri Charan Babu, who is a police officer, cannot surely be approved of. The case ought to be proceeded with, as the charges are serious; and should the complainant fail to prove his case, he ought to be, if the Court thinks proper, proceeded against according to law for having brought unsustainable charges against a Government servant. Will the Magistrate see to this?

CHARU MIHIR,
April 21st, 1903.

8. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 21st April says that lawlessness has much increased in villages Abhayapasha, Hushunpur, Sailkahan, etc., within the jurisdiction of the Netrakona thana in the Mymensingh district. The life, property and honour of the inhabitants are in danger. Representations were made to the police but to no effect. The other day the houses of Anu and Banu, of Hushunpur, were set on fire. Nobody ventures to give evidence against the bad characters for fear of revenge. Cases of theft of paddy, betel, etc., are of every-day occurrence. The other day the betel plantation of Ram Kumar Biswas, of village Saitkahin, was reduced to ashes. Will the District Superintendent of Police, Mymensingh, make an inquiry?

SRI SRI VISHNU-
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA-BAZAR
PATRIKA,
April 22nd, 1903.

9. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 22nd April has the following:—

The *chaukidari-tax*. There is no tax in the world so cruel as the *chaukidari-tax*. Lord Curzon felt pity for those who paid the *pandhri* tax in the Central Provinces and abolished it, though it was paid only by tradesmen and artisans whose annual income exceeded Rs. 200. His Lordship has also been pleased to exempt from the income-tax all whose income is less than Rs. 1,000 a year. But the *chaukidari-tax* has to be paid by every villager who has the means to pay even two pice a month. The result is that 90 per cent. of villagers have to pay the tax. As a matter of fact, even a man who owns a hovel has to pay the tax, even if he has to starve for six months in a year. The panchayets, again, who collect the tax, are, in general, the village *badmashes*, who shew no pity to the poor in realising the tax, but realise it by the sale of their few domestic utensils, bedding and even the doors of their houses.

The *pandhir* tax in the Central Provinces used to be paid by only 22,000 people and the income-tax by only 300,000 people whose incomes ranged between Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000. But does Government know how many people have to bear the burden of this cruel *chaukidari-tax*?

The population of Bengal may be roughly estimated at 70 millions. If from this $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions be deducted as the population of towns and municipalities and 10 millions as the number of those who are unable to pay even two pice a month, the whole of the remaining 60 millions have to pay the chaukidari-tax. Every other tax affects only the richer classes, but the chaukidari-tax affects both the rich and the poor. Indeed, the very idea that out of a total population of 70 millions, 60 millions have to pay the tax is shocking. Every form of tax, except the chaukidari-tax, confers some benefit on the tax-payer. Take, for instance, the municipal taxation in Calcutta. In return for the taxes they pay, the residents of Calcutta get good water, good lighting of the streets and good roads and enjoy perfect security from thieves and dacoits. But what return do the payers of the chaukidari-tax get for the tax they pay? Far from deriving any benefit from the employment of chaukidars, the chaukidari-tax-payers generally suffer at the hands of chaukidars. Chaukidars used occasionally to do their duty of keeping watch and ward at night when they were village servants. But since they became servants of the Government, the village people have lost all control over them, they have been burdened with many duties which ought to be discharged not by chaukidars but by other servants of Government, and they have almost discontinued their duty of keeping watch and ward at night. Their principal duty now is to act as spies and informers in order to bring, with the help of the police, criminal cases against the villagers and thereby to harass them.

We therefore humbly pray to Lord Curzon that he may, before he leaves India, abolish this tax and earn the gratitude and blessings of millions of His Majesty's Indian subjects. His Excellency will learn on enquiry that the tax is an unjust, inequitable and illegal impost. When even the Russian Government is abolishing a similar tax which now obtains in Russia, one can hardly believe that Lord Curzon will refuse to abolish the chaukidari-tax in this country which is under the more liberal rule of the British Government. We firmly believe that, if His Excellency were placed in possession of all the facts connected with this cruel tax, he would not hesitate a moment to repeal it.

10. In continuation of what has appeared in previous issues, the *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 23rd April publishes a number of letters to the following effect:—

The chaukidari-tax.

(1) The village Bhandarpur in the Rajshahi district has a population of 300 or 400, most of whom are day-labourers. Such a poor village as this has to maintain two chaukidars, one panchayet and one head-watchman. The panchayet is an unlettered man; he has therefore been obliged to appoint an assistant to help him in his work, whose salary is realised from the villagers under the name of "extra expenses," but in the receipts which are given to the latter no mention is made of this item. The cost of the chaukidars' and the head-watchman's uniforms, which are being changed on account of the transfer of the village from the Bogra district to the Rajshahi district, is also being realised from the villagers. What the head-watchman does, except blackmailing poor villagers and wayfarers with the help of his uniform, is quite unknown.

A certain day-labourer has to pay annas 12 as chaukidari-tax. This poor man has a family of three heads besides himself, a wife and two little children, whom he supported with loans in the last famine; and for these loans he has to work unpaid, fifteen days in a month, in the *mahajan's* house. He has also to pay annas 4 as "extra expenses," &c. One woman lives with a little boy in a dilapidated hut. She has to pay annas 6 and annas 2 as chaukidari-tax and "extra expense" respectively. A woman of 60, living on charity, has to pay annas 6 and annas 2. Another beggar-woman has to pay 1 anna 18 pies.

(2) The village Damdama in the Bogra district, writes a correspondent, is not free from the oppressions which usually attend the chaukidari-tax. The other day a poor helpless woman came crying to the village zamindar and said that a cup, which was the only movable property she possessed, had been seized for arrears of chaukidari-tax. A head-watchman confessed to the correspondent

SANJIVANI,
April 23rd, 1903.

that he earns on an average Rs. 20 by blackmailing poor villagers with the help of his uniform.

(3) A correspondent says that theft, dacoity and murder have greatly increased within the jurisdiction of the Sahajadpur thana in the Pabna district. The chaukidar is useless except in helping the police to oppress villagers. The correspondent gives a touching picture of how a poor widow appeared before a meeting of the panchayets of the Muradpur village leading a diseased boy by the hand; how her tattered cloth obliged her to remain at a distance and send the boy to ask for exemption from the chaukidari-tax; how the lean and emaciated boy prayed for an exemption with tears in his eyes, and how the panchayets dismissed him, saying that far from getting an exemption his tax should be doubled and how the tax was actually doubled.

The following list will show at what rate the chaukidari-tax has been increased in the Sherkhali village under the Sahajadpur thana :—

- (1) Echhlam Shaik. Chaukidari-tax increased from annas 12 to Re. 1-8.
- (2) Jurhan Shaik. Chaukidari-tax increased from annas 6 to annas 9. Has a family of seven. Earning member only one.
- (3) Chhoban Shaik. Tax increased from annas 2 to annas 9.
- (4) Golam Ali's helpless widow. Has no children. Lives in a wretched hut. Earns her livelihood by husking paddy for others. Has to pay annas 6 as chaukidari-tax.
- (5) Kedu Shaik, a day-labourer. Chaukidari-tax increased from annas 4½ to annas 9.
- (6) Mahim Shaik. Tax increased from annas 6 to annas 9.
- (7) Kachhir. Tax increased from annas 6 to annas 9.
- (8) Kharu Shaik. Tax increased from annas 6 to annas 9.
- (9) Arun Shaik, a poor day-labourer. Has to pay 6 annas as chaukidari-tax. Has a family of six to maintain.
- (10) Munir Shaik. Tax increased from as 9 to annas 12.
- (11) Emarat, a poor day-labourer. Tax increased from annas 9 to annas 12.
- (12) Baru Shaik's widow. Has a little child only. Lives on charity. Has to pay annas 6 as chaukidari-tax.
- (13) Mehir. Tax increased from annas 9 to Re. 1-2.

(4) The Nalta Circle under the Palanga police-station within the Madaripur subdivision of the Faridpur district is composed of nine villages, viz., Nalta, Gorhagaon, Chandipur, Bahar Chandipur, Sureswar, Sripur, Ichhapara, Halaisar, and Dattapati, containing 827 families. Of these 827 families not more than 24 are a little well-to-do, the remaining 803 families being composed mainly of poor illiterate cultivators. Supposing an average family to be composed of five members, the 803 families contain more than 4,000 members. Of the five panchayets in the circle only one, the collecting panchayet, knows how to read and write and the remaining four are quite illiterate. The collecting panchayet has therefore to do the work of the other four and manage the 4,000 illiterate villagers, who believe that he is the author of all chaukidari oppressions. He represented the difficulty of his position to the police authorities and the Sub-divisional Officer, but they ordered him to seize the movables of those who refused to pay enhanced chaukidari rates and criminally prosecute those who dared to offer any opposition to his work. As usual there are 10 chaukidars and one dafadar in the circle. They never go on rounds at night, and the dafadar is seldom met with. Of the 827 holdings in the circle, only 53 have been exempted from the chaukidari-tax. Of these 53 holdings, 10 belong to the 10 chaukidars, one belongs to the dafadar, one is the Chandipur post-office, and one is the cutcherry of the Kundu Babus. The *naib* of the cutcherry lives with his family in it. His exemption from the chaukidari-tax is therefore unaccountable. An increase in the number and salary of chaukidars has necessitated an enhancement of the tax. In 1305 (B.S.) the average rate per holding was annas 9-11½ pies. In the current year it is annas 14-4½ pies. In the next year it will be annas 14-11½ pies. The rates which obtained in 1305 (B.S.) have been doubled in the case of $\frac{6}{16}$ th part of the total number of holdings, increased by one-half in the case of $\frac{3}{16}$ th part, and kept unaltered in the case of the remaining $\frac{7}{16}$ th

part. In 1302 (B.S.) the correspondent and others living in one holding had to pay Re. 1-11 as *chaukidari-tax*; this tax was increased to Rs. 3 in 1303, to Rs. 3-2 in 1305, and to Rs. 3-10 in 1308. In the current year it has been increased to Rs. 7-8. Before 1302 the *chaukidari-tax* was nowhere more than annas 8. As has been said before the inhabitants of this circle are almost all very poor. What difficulty they feel in paying this enormously increased rate of taxation is therefore easily conceivable. And woe to those who fail to pay it!

Where goes the surplus money under the head "*tahsili fees*?" Most probably it goes to the panchayet's pocket, and to many it is the principal inducement to serve as a panchayet. A separate *tahsildar* should be appointed under the panchayet with this money.

11. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Nilphamari:—

SANJIVANI,
April 23rd, 1903.

Complaint against the Sub-Inspector of the punitive police at Barhgatcha in Nilphamari.

Babu Rash Vihari Bandopadhyaya is the Sub-Inspector of the punitive police now stationed in villages Barhgatcha, &c. The other day he seized some plough cattle belonging to Nilkanta Das, Kawa Das and Gagan Das, alleging that taxes were due from them. The aggrieved persons petitioned the Deputy Magistrate of Nilphamari for the release of their bullocks and stated they were not in arrears. On a reference to the *sarishta*, their statement was proved to be correct. The Deputy Magistrate has stopped the sale of the bullocks and called for an explanation from the Sub-Inspector. But where is the remedy for this unlawful seizure of bullocks, and the consequent loss to the raiyats in this season of jute and paddy cultivation?

12. The same paper after inviting the native public to send it reliable facts and figures, illustrative of the oppressive character of the *chaukidari-tax*, proceeds to make

SANJIVANI.

The *chaukidars*.

the following observations:—

We propose to show that it is the duty of Government to pay the *chaukidars*. We read in page 40 of the Bengal Administration Report for 1891-92:—

"No doubt there is room for much improvement in the character and conduct of the rural police, and the Lieutenant-Governor hopes that the changes effected in the law which has lately been passed in the Bengal Council may lead to improvement. The principal object of this legislation has been to bring the village police into closer relations with the executive authority of Government, and while retaining the local knowledge of men resident in the village in which they are to be employed, to organize the *chaukidars* as a branch of the regular police in direct subordination to the Magistrate. Under the old law the village panchayet not only appointed the *chaukidars*, but had authority to decide within specified limits how many *chaukidars* should be employed, and to fix their salaries. Under the new law the panchayet will nominate, but the appointment of the village watch will rest with the Magistrate. The Magistrate and not the panchayet will determine the number of *chaukidars* and fix their salaries."

It is evident from this extract that the *chaukidars* are no more servants of the villagers. They are servants of the State—are a part and parcel of the police. Why, then, should the villagers pay the salaries of the *chaukidars*? The salaries ought to be paid by Government. In 1900-1901 the villagers of Bengal paid Rs. 71,69,189-1-7 as the pay of *chaukidars*? Is this just or fair?

13. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 24th April says that it has received various complaints against a certain subordinate police officer attached to the Boraigram thana in Nator.

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

Complaints against a police officer in Nator.

14. The same paper says:—Owners of liquor and *toddy* shops and keepers of gambling-houses in Calcutta make monthly payments to the police of the thanas within the jurisdiction of which those shops and houses are

HITAVADI.

Corruption in the Calcutta Police.

respectively situated. Now, these monthly payments are nothing but bribes. But has the Commissioner of Police ever inquired as to the manner in which this money is distributed among the thana people—as to the persons who are the recipients of the same? Almost everybody in Calcutta knows that these bribes are given and received. It is, therefore, hard to believe that the

Commissioner of Police is not aware of the fact. Will he now be pleased to make the inquiry suggested above?

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

15. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Isvaripur, Satkhira, in the Khulna district. Some bad characters of village Isvaripur have for some time past been committing acts of lawlessness and oppression with the help and support of Babu Shyama Charan Gupta, the daroga of the Shyamnagar outpost. The inhabitants of Isvaripur, Bansipur and Khagraghat petitioned the Magistrate of Khulna for protection, but to no effect.

Complaint against the daroga of the Shyamnagar outpost in the Khulna district.

HITAVADI.

16. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Howrah: "Taruk Kundu died within 48 hours of the grievous hurt received from the *lathi* of his Muhammadan assailant. At the time there was in the house no male member of his family except his minor son, and therefore no report could be sent to the police promptly. The matter was, however, reported the next day; but no police officer has yet come to inquire. The man, it is said, is now threatening Taruk Kundu's son and son-in-law with a like fate." Will the Magistrate of Howrah institute an inquiry into the matter?

Complaint against the Howrah police.

HITAVADI.

17. A correspondent writes to the same paper: On the 1st of April last we went to Fort William to purchase a pair of shoes. After making the purchase we were returning, when a soldier from the upper floor of a barrack called out to us, saying "Babu," "Babu." We turned back, and he began to make insulting gestures at us. Another soldier came up there, and joined his comrade in the prank. They also muttered something at us. We kept quiet, fearing a shot. At last we came out into the *maidan*. It was nearly six. Cricket, foot ball and other sports were being played at various places. As we were proceeding, somebody struck us with a bat and told us to "move away." We looked back and saw a soldier. He belonged to a party of players and we understood we were thus insulted because we were passing by that way. Now what right have the players to interfere with one's right of way in a public road or path? Will the authorities see to all this?

European soldiers insulting natives.

HITAVADI.

18. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Burdwan. On the 20th Chaitra last at midnight some 10 or 15 men broke open by means of axes the outer door of the house of Babu Upendra Nath Chakrabarti, of village Saldaha in Memari outpost, and took away ornaments worth about Rs. 100. About a month ago, there was a dacoity in the house of a milkman in village Kennagram. The dacoits decamped with valuables worth Rs. 300 to Rs. 400. On the 8th April, four ruffians entered the house of Babu Hem Chandra Malik at night. An alarm was raised, the neighbours were aroused from their sleep, and the dacoits had to beat a retreat. In all these cases, the police seem to be quite indifferent, and nothing has been done to trace the offenders.

Dacoities in the Burdwan district.

HITAVADI,

19. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Deoghar: It has been customary here for some years past, on the occasion of the *Muharram* festival, to take the *tazias* all round the town till 9 or 10 P.M., and then to proceed to the *musjid* to perform the closing ceremonies. This year, however, the police compelled the *tazias* to proceed towards the *musjid* before 6 P.M. In consequence, there was a fight, the police being armed with big *lathis*. Several Muhammadans were wounded, and the proper observance of the festival was seriously interfered with. This has caused dissatisfaction among the local Muhammadan population. A complaint has been lodged before the Magistrate against Mukunda Babu, the Police Sub-Inspector, in this connection. The complainant showed to the Magistrate marks of violence on his body.

A fracas between the police and a Muharram party at Deoghar.

HITAVADI,

20. The same paper says that the other day there was a theft in the house of Babu Ram Chandra Chattopadhyaya, of Pathukpara in Behala in the 24-Parganas. The thieves decamped with some gold ornaments and wearing apparel. No trace has yet been found of the offenders.

A theft case in Behala in the 24-Parganas.

21. A correspondent writes to the same paper from Deoghar: Some days ago, a number of dacoits entered the house of a respectable gentleman in Carstairs town here.

A dacoity at Deoghar.

An alarm was raised, the neighbours collected in the house, and the dacoits had to go away. A report was sent to the thana; the daroga came for an enquiry but he simply laughed the matter out. The next day after night-fall the dacoits threw stones and brickbats at the house for nearly an hour. On the third day, the dacoits so severely assaulted a servant of the house that he fell down senseless. The daroga, however, continues to be indifferent.

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

22. A correspondent, writing to the *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca] of the 26th April, says:—The other night while the boat, plying between Serajdigha and Dacca, was nearing the Buktabali *char*, the passengers heard a

River dacoits at Buktabali *char*
in the Dacca district.

loud cry of distress and danger at no great distance. The boat was made to proceed in the direction from which the cry came; and a little way off, it was found that a number of persons were standing on the bank, while four or five men were assaulting three passengers in a boat on the river, the fourth man in the boat being tied up. On the approach of the passengers of the other boat, who numbered about 30, the ruffians beat a hasty retreat.

DACCA PRAKASH,
April 30th, 1903.

23. The *Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 27th April says that of late there have been two murders in the Pabna district. In

Lawlessness in the Pabna district.

one case, the victim is a young woman in a state of pregnancy, wife of Dina Nath Maitra, of village Hopania in Dulai thana. The daroga of the thana, after an inquiry, has suspected the husband and taken him into custody. He has not, however, confessed his crime. The other case happened near Ataikula. The culprits have not yet been traced.

PRATIVASI,
April 27th, 1903.

Thefts and other acts of lawlessness are on the increase in the Pabna district. There have been several cases of theft in the town of Pabna itself, but the police has not been able to detect a single thief.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

24. Referring to the Hon'ble Mr. Whitworth's observations in the Supreme Legislative Council regarding Civil Court bailiffs and their work, the *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 13th April says:—In criminal cases, a warrant is generally issued against an accused person on

A suggestion to amend a provision of the Civil Procedure Code.

his failing to appear, without sufficient reason, in Court after the receipt of summons; and the warrant failing to reach him his property is attached in order to compel his appearance. There is, however, no provision of the law for deciding a criminal case in the absence of the accused. The civil law, on the other hand, provides for an *ex-parte* hearing of a case in the absence of the defendant; and *ex-parte* decrees are often made by Courts relying on the bailiff's return. Now the law should be amended in the following way:—It should enforce personal service of Civil Court summonses, doing away with the existing practice of putting them up in some conspicuous place; and should provide for the issue of a warrant in case of the defendant's non-attendance, not for the purpose of arresting him, but for obtaining the mark of his finger, and in case of his declining to affix his mark should arrest him; and in case of the defendant not being found even after the issue of the warrant, should serve a notice upon him through the post-office. If this were done, there would be no necessity for re-trial of a case after the passing of a decree.

SUHRID,
April 13th, 1903.

25. The *Barisal Hitaisi* [Barisal] of the 20th April hears that the First Munsif of Patuakhali appoints his orderly to officiate as peon and makes his private cook or servant act for the orderly. This is unfair to the

The First Munsif of Patuakhali in the Backergunge district.

enrolled apprentices, though this may be somewhat advantageous to the Munsif.

BARISAL HITAISSI,
April 20th, 1903.

26. Referring to the Sangramgarh murder case, the *Chara Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 21st April says: We are not at all surprised at the acquittal of Mr. Martin, for that was a foregone conclusion. Mr. Roe's charge to the jury has really surprised

The Sangramgarh murder case.

CHARA MIHIR,
April 21th, 1903.

us. We did not know that a Sessions Judge could charge the jury in that way. There will be an appeal to the High Court by the Government of Bengal against the acquittal in this case, and we shall anxiously await the result. This case furnishes another instance of how a European charged with the murder of a native, is let off by a jury composed of his countrymen and is thus calculated to further strengthen the impression in the public mind that a European, charged with such a heinous offence, is safe in the hands of European jurors. Government should do its best for removing such an impression.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA-BAZAR
PATRIKA,
April 22nd, 1903.

27. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 22nd April regrets to learn that the behaviour of A Deputy Magistrate of Monghyr, has so much disgusted the mukhtears of

the local bar that they have discontinued practising in his Court and have submitted a petition against him to the District Magistrate. The Magistrate has called for the Deputy Magistrate's explanation, which has not yet been submitted. The writer is pained to learn of such ill-feeling between the bench and the bar, each of which would give the best proof of its education and good manners by treating the other with due respect. It is very unfortunate that ill feeling between the bench and the bar has now become a matter of frequent occurrence.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.

28. The same paper has the following:—

The High Court's decision in Peter Mughan's case.

The Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling reported Peter Mughan's case to the High Court for enhancement of sentence because he believed the accused to have been actuated by a very bad motive in his treatment of the complainant Bhutia woman. The High Court, however, on going through the record of the case, has been unable to arrive at the same conclusion. It has not only found the accused guilty of only the lighter offences of trespass and assault but has stated it as its opinion that the quarrelling and wrestling between the complainant and the accused was the result of drunkenness, and a perusal of the judgment would lead one to suppose as if the woman too was drunk, though there is no ground for such an inference from the evidence recorded in the case.

It is, indeed, monstrous to think that a soldier, who entered the house of a respectable woman, grasped her with his arms and struggled with her, has been allowed to escape only with a fine of Rs. 25. The High Court's decision in the case has, in fact, pained and alarmed the whole country. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is requested to remove the alarm by seeing that justice is done in the case. It is desirable that the High Court should hold a re-trial.

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

29. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 24th April says that it has received various complaints against the Sub-Registrar of Guskara in the Burdwan district. It is alleged, among other things, that people, having occasion to appear before him for registration of deeds, are subjected to unnecessary hardship and loss of money.

HITAVADI.

30. The same paper says: Babu Daulat Singh is a Settlement Inspector in the Deoghar subdivision. Babu Guna Ram Chaudhari is a *Mokrardar* of village Siria. Somehow or other Babu Guna Ram incurred the displeasure of Babu Daulat Singh. On the 6th April, in connection with the settlement of a dispute regarding land in mauza Furni Sarai in Bamungaona taluk before Babu Narendra Kumar Ghose, Assistant Settlement Officer, Babu Daulat Singh said that during the first survey, Babu Guna Ram had raised no objection on the ground of his possessing a right in the land. Babu Guna Ram replied that he had made an objection and requested the *amin* in Babu Daulat Singh's presence to take it down. He also called two witnesses to support his statement. But Babu Daulat Singh disbelieved the two witnesses, and of his own motion called a Sonthal witness, who said that he had not seen Babu Guna Ram. Upon this, Babu Daulat Singh cried out "Where is Durga Singh? Beat this man." Durga Singh was, however, not present; and Babu Narendra Kumar ordered *chaprasi* Megh Singh to beat Guna Ram. The *chaprasi* began to belabour Guna Ram on the head with his heavy shoe, having an iron heel. Guna Ram

fell down on the ground; still the assault did not cease. We insist on a prompt and honest enquiry in the matter.

31. In continuation of what has appeared in previous issues, the same paper publishes a correspondence to the following effect:—

The First Munsif of Beguserai.

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

During the trial of the pauper case No. 1 of 1902, Mr. Hassan one day told the pleaders that he would not allow them to examine witnesses at length and would punish the pleader who might disobey this order.

Babu Abinash Chandra Banerji, a coal merchant of Giridih, brought a suit against Babu Ganga Das, a rich and well-known contractor of Delhi, for recovery of less than Rs. 400. Abinash Babu's agent is a brother of Mr. Hassan's *chaprasi*, Lal Behari, and is therefore a *persona grata* with the all-powerful Nazir of the Court. Ganga Das Babu's properties in Beguserai town were attached before the decision of the case. Babu Ganga Das made an application to the effect that more properties had been attached than were mentioned in the process for attachment, and that the peon, who had executed the process, was committing great *zulm* on the spot. On this Mr. Hassan ordered the withdrawal of the peon from the spot. On the following day again Babu Ganga Das made an application stating that the peon had not been withdrawn. This made Mr. Hassan extremely angry against the applicant. The Nazir when called denied the applicant's complaint and said that the Court's order had been carried out. The applicant's pleader requested the Court to record the Nazir's statement, but the Court refused to do it. Mr. Hassan then asked the pleader why his client was not paying the claim. The pleader said that he had reasons for so doing which would be made known in proper time. On hearing this Mr. Hassan went mad with rage and said that four or five days before the defendant had himself admitted the claim in his presence. The pleader then filed an application for the transfer of the case from Mr. Hassan's file, as Mr. Hassan had confessed that he was a witness in it. Mr. Hassan sent the application to the District Judge, giving reasons why the case should not be transferred from his file. The District Judge, however, transferred the case from his file.

Mr. Hassan treats the pleaders so badly that in 1902 all of them, with the exception of one, resolved not to plead in his Court. They were afterwards appeased with great difficulty, but not before Mr. Hassan had asked pardon of some of them.

Mr. Hassan loves the mukhtars, who wield great influence over him. He allows them to do much work which mukhtars are not legally entitled to do. In 1902 he allowed mukhtar Laldhare, who is not a revenue agent, to file the plaints of 400 rent-suits in behalf of Chammanlal, a zamindar.

In 1902 a process came from Bhagalpur for attachment of the pay of Lalji Pershad, Mr. Hassan's sarishtadar, in execution of a decree against him. The requisition was made twice from Bhagalpur, but the sarishtadar did not bring the matter to Mr. Hassan's notice. Afterwards Lalji Pershad was transferred to the First Munsif's Court (Mr. Hassan was at that time Second Munsif). An English *parwana* again came in Mr. Hassan's Court in the matter. This time Mr. Hassan saw it and sent it to the First Munsif, who gave it to his sarishtadar. Nothing further was done in the matter. Afterwards a letter came to Mr. Hassan from Bhagalpur that as repeated *parwanas* were being disregarded, the matter would soon be reported to the District Judge. This frightened Mr. Hassan, who sent the letter to the First Munsif and wrote out a long explanation on the subject and sent it to Bhagalpur. The claim of the decree was paid up, and there the matter ended. Lalji Pershad escaped unpunished though he had committed the grave offence of having hushed up the *parwanas*.

32. The *Samay* [Calcutta] of the 24th April takes exception to the decision, arrived at by the High Court in the Darjeeling

SAMAY,
April 24th, 1903.

The Darjeeling soldier's case.

soldier's case, that the whole matter was nothing but a drunken brawl. Were the Bhutia women also drunk that the whole matter was only a drunken brawl? The High Court's decision has added insult to injury. Eastern women are generally very delicate and sensitive in the matter of their modesty. It was therefore only natural that the Bhutia lady was at first silent over the question of the accused person's attempt to outrage her modesty. Again, if the accused person's object was nothing but to

make a drunken brawl, why did he not attack a man in the street? It was surely a curious way of making an innocent brawl by entering into the zenana of a respectable lady and trying to ravish her. Would the result of the case have been the same had the accused been a native and the complainant a European? It is for such decision as the present one that the High Court is losing its prestige among the people. Lord Curzon is requested to call for the papers of the case and do justice.

BANGAVASI,
April 25th, 1903.

33. Referring to the High Court's decision in Peter Mughan's case, the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th April writes as follows:—

The High Court in Peter Mughan's case. The Hon'ble Judges of the High Court have not explained why the drunken soldier took it particularly into his head to run after and quarrel with three women and not any man in the street. Were women the fittest objects for a soldier to make a display of his strength upon? The fact that the High Court considered a fine of Rs. 25 an adequate punishment for a turbulent soldier who in broad daylight trespassed into the house of a respectable citizen, attacked without provocation a poor helpless woman and even for a time wrestled with her is what has quite astounded us. Is punishment like this calculated to have a deterrent effect upon men bent upon oppression? What will it come to, if drunken soldiers always take it into their heads to run after women in order to try their strength upon them? The truth is that the High Court Judges who tried Mughan's case were misled. But such mistake on the part of the highest Court in the land must have very serious consequences. It is to be hoped, after all, that the military authorities will take severe notice of the conduct of unruly soldiers like Mughan.

(d)—Education.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA-BAZAR
PATRIKA,
April 22nd, 1903.

34. Referring to the dates which have been fixed for holding the Entrance, First Arts and B. A. Examinations in 1904, the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 22nd April fails to see why the University authorities should insist on holding those examinations just at the time of the year when plague and other epidemic diseases break out in Calcutta.

The writer knows it, as a matter of fact, that a death or two take place every year among the candidates from plague or other epidemic disease. Now, are not the University authorities responsible for these deaths? It is nothing but sheer wrong-headedness on their part to disregard public feeling on the matter.

HITAVADI
April 24th, 1903.

35. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 24th April publishes a reply to the criticism of G. C. Basu's Science Reader which was published in a previous issue (see Report on Native Papers for 11th April, paragraph 19).

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

BIKAS,
April 21st, 1903.

36. The *Bikas* [Barisal] of the 21st April says that cholera is raging as an epidemic in the town of Barisal, and attributes the outbreak to neglect on the part of the local Municipality. The conservancy of the town is not attended to properly. There is a scarcity of pure drinking water, the reserve tanks being not taken care of. The streets are full of dust, the watering of the streets being carried on perfunctorily. Then, although the use of the Muhammadan burial-ground in the centre of the town has been prohibited by an order of the Municipality, nobody seems to heed it much, for corpses are being buried there every day, and the noxious emanations pollute the surrounding air.

(f)—Questions affecting the land.

NIHAR,
April 28th, 1903.

37. The *Nihar* [Contai] of the 28th April says that it has received complaints regarding the conduct of certain *amins*, now engaged in the fresh survey operations in thana Nandigram in the Midnapore district. There

Oppressive acts of the *amins* in the Midnapore district.

is a man in Amdabad, named Jharhu Giri. He could not satisfy the *amin*; and six mango trees, one lemon tree, one *dabin* tree, four or fifteen plantain trees, belonging to him, have been cut down by the *amin*'s order. The following persons have avoided being put to such loss by satisfying the *amin*:—Radhu Mahara, Kshetra Mohun Ojha, Nara Hari Das, Madhu Sudan Pramanik, Chandra Mohun Dinda, Yudisthir Pradhan, Sadagar Sau, Indra Bhuiya, Banu Sit, Sib Prasad Jana; and Jhorbu Das, Vishmya Mana, Kam Dev Mana, of village Subadi; and Indra Mana, Naryan Mana, Fakir Jana, and others, of village Birulia. Will the authorities inquire?

38. The same paper publishes a "contributed" article on the "Miseries of the khas mahal raiyats in Contai." It says:

The condition of the khas mahal raiyats in Contai in the Midnapore district.

There has been failure of crops for ten successive years in mauzas Kamalpur and Daudpur in the Majnamuta estate, in mauzas Paharpur, Kaorhamal,

Uddhavpur, Silampur, Shyampur, Gopalpur, &c., in the Jalamuta estate—all in the Contai khas mahal—owing to there being no sufficient outlet for water. This year also the crops have been destroyed, and since August last the raiyats have been suffering from scarcity. They have been chiefly living upon herbs and leaves of trees. People have deserted their homes, leaving to their fates their little children and aged relatives. The sufferings of the cattle are not less severe. Straw cannot be had, and the thatched huts have been rendered uninhabitable in rain and storm. Cholera, small-pox and diarrhoea have followed in the wake of scarcity.

In these days, the household utensils and lands of the raiyats are being sold by auction for arrears of revenue; and what is more, the tahsildar has proclaimed by beat of drum that arrears for more than Rs. 5 will make any land liable to be included in the certificate list. Then again, not only household utensils but clothings and beddings are being sold by auction for arrears of the chaukidari-tax. Strangely enough, no chaukidars can be seen on duty; and there are cases of theft and incendiarism every now and then.

Last December, when the Commissioner of the Burdwan Division, accompanied by the Subdivisional Officer of Contai, visited Contai, the raiyats represented their grievances, and hopes were held out of redress. Nearly four months have elapsed since then, but nothing has been done towards finding proper outlet for water. On the contrary, a tank is being re-excavated in Kamalpur mauza at a cost of over a thousand rupees. But who complains about scarcity of water? This is a waste of money which could have been very much more profitably expended in making remissions of revenue, or in relieving the distress of the raiyats.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

39. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 24th April says that the fare for a third class monthly ticket between Konnagar and

Fare of a monthly ticket between two stations on the East Indian Railway.

Howrah on the East Indian Railway is a little higher than what it ought to be. Nearly 300

persons, most of whom are employed as clerks in Calcutta on small salaries, travel from Konnagar to Howrah and back every day; and to them this higher price is rather a hardship. Will the East Indian Railway authorities see to this?

40. (1) One Jogendra Nath Dutt writes to the same paper from village Daiasa, in the Burdwan district: (1) During the

Complaints against the railway staff at Howrah.

last *Durga Puja* holidays, we four students applied to the Agent to the East Indian Railway for four

"concession" tickets. Our application was granted, but on asking the booking-clerk for the four tickets, we were told "this year no concession tickets will be issued to third class passengers." We saw the station-master, and he signed our application. We returned to the booking-clerk with it; but he was incorrigible and would not issue the "concession" tickets, and we had to pay the full fare. (2) One morning we had to travel from Howrah to Guskara and wanted to purchase two third class tickets. We paid Rs. 3, and we were entitled to be paid $11\frac{1}{2}$ annas as balance. The booking-clerk,

NIBAB,
April 28th, 1903.

HITAVADI,
April 24th, 1903.

HITAVADI,

however, said he had no change; and so we could not get the tickets. At last we had to pay half an anna to a *poddar* for change. It is not true that the booking-clerk had no change at the time. This is only a dodge for his illegal gain. (3) Tickets are not issued during all hours, as notified to the public. Booking-clerks begin their work only a few minutes before the time for the departure of the train; and this causes great inconvenience and hardship to the passengers.

(2) Jnanendra Nath Some writes from 17 Canal West Road, Calcutta: On the 20th March last, I had to go to the Howrah station to see some friends of mine off to Baidyanath by the 4-30 mixed Delhi train. I paid Rs. 33 for 12 tickets for Baidyanath. The booking-clerk, however, while receiving the money, threw the rupees in such a manner on the table that a few slipped from it and fell on the ground. He picked them up, and after counting them, said that there were only Rs. 32. I replied I had taken particular care to count the rupees before handing them over to him. He was, however, inexorable; and as among my friends there were some ladies and the train was about to start, I had no time to wait and argue, and so paid another rupee. Will the matter be enquired into?

(3) Goloke Nath Mukhopadhyaya writes from Berhampore, Murshidabad: The coolies at the Howrah station often demand and extort exorbitant payment for work done by them. They also offer to underweigh luggages in consideration for illegal gratification.

HITAVADI.
April 24th, 1903.

41. Upendra Chandra Chakravarti writes to the same paper from Bandyakowaljani, Tangail, Mymensingh:—

Complaint against the booking-clerk of the Krishnagar station on the Ranaghat-Krishnagar Railway.

The last *Churamani* *Yog* at Navadwipa gave opportunities for the railway police to extort illegal gratification. But the conduct of the booking-clerk

at the Krishnagar station on the Ranaghat-Krishnagar Railway on the 17th *Chaitra* was reprehensible. I asked him the fare from Krishnagar to Goalundo. He said it was Re. 1-12-9. I paid him Rs. 17-15-6 for ten tickets. I could not examine the tickets then and there owing to extreme pressure for even standing accommodation. On coming out of the crowd, however, I had a look at the tickets and was surprised to find that the fare was Re. 1-11-3 and not Re. 1-12-9 as told by the booking-clerk. On enquiry I learned that many other persons also shared my fate. At last some of us went up to the booking-clerk and asked why the excess fare was taken. The booking-clerk rather got annoyed and replied, "where is the proof that you paid in excess." We understood what the booking-clerk meant; and as the train was about to arrive, we could not wait and argue. We subsequently came to learn that the same dodge was employed by booking-clerks at several other stations. Will the authorities enquire?

(h)—General.

42. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 23rd April says:—

SANJIVANI,
[April 23rd, 1903.]

Has Mr. Pedler done this?

The *Calcutta Gazette* of the 25th February publishes the following notification:—"Mr. E. Pegler,

Superintendent, Alipore Reformatory School, is appointed to be Superintendent of the Hazaribagh Reformatory School, *vice* Mr. J. Hill, about to retire." The notification was dated the 24th February, but Mr. Hill still continues as Superintendent of the Hazaribagh Reformatory School. We hear he will retire after two days.

Various reports have reached us as to why this order of Government has been kept in abeyance so long. We give them for what they are worth, and request the Government to make an enquiry.

We hear that in February last Mr. Pedler went to Hazaribagh. While there he was requested by some Europeans of the place to allow Mr. Hill to continue in service till the 25th April in order that he might be entitled to a handsome pension; it being pointed out to Mr. Pedler that earlier retirement would mean a smaller pension for the gentleman. Mr. Pedler, however, saw no way to comply with this request. Then one European gentleman suggested that Mr. Pegler be granted leave. By that time Mr. Pegler had already left Calcutta for Hazaribagh. Mr. Pedler on his way from Hazaribagh to Calcutta,

met Mr. Pegler at the Doomar Dák Bungalow. Then at Mr. Pedler's request, Mr. Pegler took leave and Mr. Hill was appointed to act for him.

We would request the Government to inquire if Mr. Pedler really did this in order to enable Mr. Hill to earn a handsome pension, *i.e.*, to make Government a loser.

43. Referring to the reduction of the salt tax, the *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura] of the 23rd April says that those, for whose benefit the tax has been reduced by eight annas per maund, would have benefited more appreciably if the reduction had been made to the extent of two annas instead. As it is, the reduction has been more advantageous to the dealer than to the poor consumer who purchases, say a quarter-anna worth of salt at a time, while a reduction by ten annas per maund would have enabled the latter to purchase a quarter seer of salt for a quarter anna. Will Lord Curzon consider the matter

BANKURA
DARPAN,
April 23rd, 1903.

44. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th April has the following:—
There are two scales for the employés of the Indian Telegraph Department, one is called the general scale, and the other is called the local scale. The general scale carries with it a higher rate of salaries than are paid to officers belonging to the local scale, and many advantages not belonging to the latter. It is filled mainly by Europeans and Eurasians, though no one has as yet furnished any explanation as to why natives are excluded from it. Some time ago the following memorandum was issued to all European and Eurasian signallers in the Department, but not to any native signaller:—

BANGAVASI,
April 25th, 1903.

CALCUTTA,

August 29th 1902.

Calcutta office.

SIGNALLER

You are requested to state below whether you volunteer for a transfer to the general scale. You are to understand that if you are transferred to that scale, you will on no account be allowed to revert to the local scale. A list will be submitted to the Director-General for his order at intervals, but it is now notified for information that any signaller who does not volunteer for transfer before the 31st October will be considered as having elected for permanent service in the local scale.

H. E. CHAPPEL,

Superintendent, Calcutta Office.

Why was not the memorandum also issued to native signallers? Europeans and Eurasians are being importuned to transfer themselves to the general scale, whilst the native employés are unable, even by entreaty, to get the permission of the authorities to get such a transfer for themselves. What is the reason of this distinction? The writer cannot believe that the Government of India has ordered the making of it. People would have seen some propriety in the distinction if Eurasians had generally made abler signallers than natives. But such superiority has never been proved. On the contrary, the writer knows of some Eurasian signallers who are so ignorant of their work as to be unable to take charge of even a small office, but who are yet entertained in the general scale. A certain European officer of the general scale was sent to take charge of a small telegraph station in Bengal. But on arriving at the station he found himself too ignorant to take up the appointment, and a telegram was sent to the Divisional Superintendent of Barrackpore to the following effect:—

T. M. Ch—unable to take over charge. He knows absolutely nothing of the work of a small office, &c.

We do not disclose the name of the officer, as our object is not to bring any particular officer into disgrace, but simply to ask the authorities of the Telegraph Department not to show undue favour to any particular class or classes of employés. Such partiality is not only detrimental to the interests of Government, but causes serious disaffection among other employés. Lord

Curzon's attention is invited to this matter, because he is reputed to be an upright and independent man.

Mr. Pinhey, Superintendent of the Arrakan Division, said that it was not advisable to promote natives to the general scale, because they were unwilling or unable to go to distant frontier stations in Assam and Burma. But this charge is baseless. Again, the Superintendent of the Rajputana Division wrote in his letter No. 1659 of 1892 that the provision of a higher rate of salaries in the general scale was due not to the greater ability of the Europeans and East Indians who were employed in that scale, but to the fact that the cost of living was higher for such officers than for the natives. An argument like this was never heard before in the mouth of any Government official. Instead of saying anything about its rightness or wrongness, we wish only to point out that the principle enunciated in the argument is not followed in every case. If it were, we would have seen Brahman and Kayastha employés of Government and also respectable Musalman employés paid better than other employés, simply by reason of their superior social rank, necessitating a rather costly mode of living. To make a special rule in favour of a particular class is not certainly right.

On the 20th March last, the Director-General of the Telegraph Department wrote the following letter to all Divisional Superintendents:—

"SIR,

I HAVE the honour to request that you will please take early steps with a view to obtaining candidates suitable for training as signallers. Owing to the proportion of natives to the non-natives at present employed in the signalling establishment being much in excess of the percentage approved by Government, European or Eurasian candidates should for the present be examined."

It is to be inferred from this letter—(1) that the Government of India has laid down the proportion of native to non-native officers to be employed in the Department; (2) that for some time to come no native candidates will be taken into it. This is something very serious! Has the Government of India really laid down the proportion mentioned above?

DACCA PRAKAS,
April 26th, 1903.

What the proposed Government Model Farm in the Dacca Division should teach agriculturists.

45. The *Dacca Prakas* [Dacca] of the 26th April does not approve of the proposal to teach agriculturists improved methods of jute cultivation at the proposed Government Agricultural Farm in the Dacca Division. Twenty years ago, there was no jute cultivation in East Bengal. But larger areas of land are now devoted to the cultivation of jute than to that of paddy and other food-grains; and this fact may partially account for the frequent occurrence in recent years of famines in East Bengal, which were almost unknown in the past. It would be better if the proposed Agricultural Farm were to undertake to impart instructions to agriculturists regarding better methods of raising paddy, potato, *potole*, and other edible crops.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

NIHAR,
April 28th, 1903.

Scarcity in certain *mauzas* in the Midnapore district.

46. A correspondent, writing to the *Nihar* [Contai] of the 28th April from Balighai in the Midnapore district, says that the inhabitants of Kamalpur, Daudpur, Shilampur, Uddhabpur and 30 or 32 other *mauzas* are suffering much from scarcity. Many cannot procure even one full meal every day. There is no proper outlet for water, and this is considered to have brought about the failure of crops. Survey operations, however, are in full swing, and the surveyors are busy cutting down the fruit-trees of the raiyats. This is being much felt as an act of oppression. Will the authorities see to this?

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

CHARU MIHIR,
April 21st, 1903.

The Lieutenant-Governor's recent visit to Chittagong.

47. Referring to the Lieutenant-Governor's recent visit to Chittagong, the *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 21st April says that many respectable gentlemen did not seek an interview with His Honour, as the Magistrate had intimated that anybody, soliciting the honour, should apply to the District Magistrate first. The President of the Chittagong Association could not have

an interview, as his application was rejected by the Magistrate. The Chittagong Association's address to the Lieutenant-Governor, as originally drafted by that body, contained references to certain wants and grievances of the people; but subsequently these were expunged from the document at the instance of the Magistrate and the Commissioner. Then, has the Lieutenant-Governor ascertained the views of the people of Chittagong from gentlemen who are looked upon by them as their representatives? If not, his visit to Chittagong, like gubernatorial visits to many other towns, brought very little profit or advantage to the inhabitants of the district.

48. Referring to that portion of the Hon'ble Sir Denzil Ibbetson's budget speech in which he referred to the Government's proposals to improve the agriculture of the country, the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika*

Government and agricultural improvement.

[Calcutta] of the 22nd April writes as follows:—

It will do the country more harm than good if the proposals result only in the entertainment of a number of high-paid European scientists without conferring on it any practical benefits in the shape of enabling agriculturists to raise better crops and thereby earn more money. It will do the country very little real good merely to open model farms or to employ at a large cost the services of a number of scientists to carry on researches in agricultural science, if, at the same time, steps are not taken to familiarise the cultivators with the results of those researches and to make them appreciate the benefits to be derived from the application of scientific processes to the cultivation of land, destruction of crop-pests and manuring.

Really beneficial measures for the improvement of agriculture have been adopted in the Central Provinces. The Hon'ble Rai Bipin Krishna Bose Bahadur referred to this in his speech. He said:—

"Much useful work is being done in the Central Provinces in the matter of agricultural improvement. The principle kept in view is not to force reforms inconsistent with the condition of our agriculture, but to help in the introduction of such improved methods as can readily assimilate with our existing methods. And as this is best done by working in the midst of the people themselves where they can watch and learn what is being done, small demonstration farms, subsidiary to the experimental farm at Nagpur, have been started in suitable localities in various parts of the Province. Selected seeds and seeds of improved varieties are being distributed. * * * * * Intelligent landholders and cultivators are being helped in every way to introduce improved methods in their own farms. Useful information written in simple language is being disseminated. All this and much more is being silently done."

Similar methods should be adopted everywhere in India, and Government should now employ in the Agricultural Department all those gentlemen who have received an agricultural education in Cirencester. It will not be possible to teach illiterate and ignorant Indian cultivators improved methods of agriculture through the agency of learned European scientists. The proposals which have been made by Government in this connection will result only in the establishment of an well-equipped agricultural college in the country, but nothing has as yet been heard about the arrangements that should be made for disseminating among the peasantry the benefits derivable from such an institution. Sir Denzil Ibbetson was, of course, right in advising the landlords and their tenants to join hands with the Government. But much good cannot be expected from the efforts of Government, unless everything it does is done as in the Central Provinces, in the midst of the people themselves.

49. The same paper says:—

The Lieutenant-Governor's arrival at Darjeeling. It is rumoured that the native gentlemen, including many respectable pleaders, who went to the Darjeeling railway station to receive the Officiating Lieutenant-Governor on his arrival at Darjeeling were, by order, not allowed by the police to go on the platform. Many people are complaining of this in the Press. But it is inevitable for people who have no sense of self-respect to suffer such slight and humiliation. Could not the native gentlemen in question

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
April 22nd, 1903.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.

resist the temptation of going uninvited to the railway station to receive the Lieutenant-Governor?

BANGAVASI.
April 25th, 1903.

50. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th April says that on hearing that there was a display of *lathi* and sword play at the Berhampore Provincial Conference according to the methods formerly prevalent in Bengal, the *Englishman* newspaper wrote:—"The Maharaja of Nator's speech at the Conference was both sober and judicious; but what is to be said of the methods of a political organisation which concludes its proceedings with a display by *lathials*? It is this sort of silliness (it can hardly be called sedition) which prevents the Congress party from being taken seriously by right-thinking persons."

These remarks of the *Englishman* only show its ignorance. In this country of Hindus, displays by *lathials*, swordsmen and wrestlers, and other displays of a similar nature, calculated to show the physical strength and courage of those who take part in them, are very common in connection with festive occasions. If not in Calcutta, at least in the mufassal, a marriage procession is still often followed by a party of *lathi*, sword and bamboo players, who hold matches with a similar party assembled at the bride's house. On the day of the *Durga Puja* on which the image of the goddess is consigned to water, displays by *lathials* are still held in many places. Similar displays also take place in connection with the *gajan* ceremony which is held on the occasion of the hook-swinging festival. And what is the Congress or the Conference but a festival? There was therefore nothing unusual in the display by *lathials* held in Berhampore in connection with the Conference. The writer, indeed, fails to see what led the *Englishman* to make so much noise about such a small matter, and to talk of silliness and even of sedition in connection therewith. All right-thinking men will be pained to see the *Englishman's* nervous debility on the present occasion.

BHARAT MITRA,
April 25th, 1903.

51. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 25th April has been sorry to learn that a number of native gentlemen who went to welcome Mr. Bourdillon, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, on his arrival at Darjeeling, were not allowed to go on the platform of the station. They had to come back disappointed.

RANGALAYA,
April 26th, 1903.

52. The *Rangalaya* [Calcutta] of the 26th April says: The rumour is again rife that Lord Curzon will retire on the expiry of his term of office and be succeeded by Mr. Brodrick. We have thought much on the subject, and are of opinion that India will be in all probability a loser should the rumour prove to be true.

In the first place, no other Viceroy of India took so much pains to ascertain the real condition of affairs in this country in various respects. As a result of this immense labour, a vast mass of useful information has been gathered and placed at the disposal of the public as well as of the State; and should Lord Curzon leave India next December, this valuable material may remain unutilised, and thus the labour may go for nothing.

In the second place, the public have been given some broad hints regarding the reforms contemplated by Lord Curzon. We may not agree with his Lordship on many points; but we firmly believe that if after his measures of reform have passed through the stage of experiment he should find that they have not proved beneficial to the country, His Excellency as a statesman of thorough independence of character and sturdy honesty of purpose will not hesitate to profit by actual experience and correct his own mistakes. Take an instance. It is generally asserted that Lord Curzon aims at checking the spread of high education in the country. To this, however, His Excellency has given a distinct and emphatic denial and has stated in no uncertain terms that his measures of reform will not interfere with the progress of high education. Now, the result of practical experiment will show who is right—Lord Curzon or his critics; and should his Lordship find that he is wrong, we are convinced that he will not besitate for a moment to follow the right course. The same may be said in regard to all other measures of reform, contemplated by Lord Curzon.

In the third place, there is just now a speck of dark cloud on the political horizon of India, and it is apprehended by many that this little speck may gradually extend, overspread the entire horizon and cause great disturbance. The state of affairs in Thibet, Afghanistan, Persia, China and on the North-Western and North-Eastern frontiers of India is ominous and troubles may break out any moment. Now, we are clearly of opinion that even if Lord Curzon had just now been employed in State service in any other part of the British Empire than India, it would have been plainly the duty of Government to summon him to take charge of Indian affairs at this moment; for who else among British Statesman of the front rank to-day possesses so much actual knowledge of the Asiatic countries named above—so much direct acquaintance with their politics? Moreover his four years' stay in India as Viceroy, must have considerably added to his knowledge of its affairs. Would it be prudent to send him away now from India?

53. Referring to the Government of India's letter, disposing of the memorial of the Bengal Landholders' Association for the amendment of section 154 of the Indian Penal Code, the same paper says: When the Viceroy has seen no reason to amend the section in question, it is useless discussing the point. But we may be permitted to make a few observations, meant for the landholders themselves who are our fellow-country men. Under British rule, the landholders of Bengal are devoted either to the enjoyment of sensual pleasures or to the oppression of the raiyats. During Moslem rule, they were entrusted with important military and administrative functions. They had also to look after their estates, and thus they were altogether too busy to find time for indulging in low immoral pleasures. But now that all their functions have been usurped by Government, and they have no public duties to perform, time heavily hangs upon their hands. That is why the landholders of Bengal are as a class indolent and ease-loving or oppressive. Now, the metropolis affords ample facilities for the gratification of the sensual appetite, and that is why many mufassal zamindars are found to be permanent residents of Calcutta. As regards the oppression of their raiyats by the landholders, this is facilitated by their taking advantage of the intricacies of the existing law.

RANGALAYA.
April 26th, 1903.

URIYA PAPERS.

54. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 18th April states that excessive heat has become intolerable and that rains are wanted urgently. The *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 16th April states that there were rains in the northern part of the Balasore district.

UTKALDIPIKA,
April 18th, 1903.
SAMVAD VAHIKA,
April 16th, 1903.

55. The Jajpur correspondent of the *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 18th April states that the repairs of the High Level Canal ought to be finished at once, as something like water-famine is being felt in almost all villages situated near that canal.

UTKALDIPIKA,
April 18th, 1903.

56. The Puri correspondent of the same paper states that cholera has set in in the Puri town and that some men have already died of the disease.

UTKALDIPIKA.

57. The *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 16th April states that fever, measles and cow-pox prevail in the Balasore district.

SAMVAD VAHIKA,
April 16th, 1903.

58. The *Garjatbasini* [Talcher] of the 18th April states that an important fair like the *Hengulamela* in the Talcher State proved a failure owing to the general dread caused by cholera, which is rampant in that State.

GARJATBASINI,
April 18th, 1903.

59. The same paper states that the *rabi* crop in that State has proved a failure.

GARJATBASINI,

60. The same paper states that a terrible earthquake occurred in that State on Sunday, the 12th April at 11-25 P. M. It is looked upon as ominous the general public of that State.

GARJATBASINI,

UTKALDIPKA.
April 18th, 1903.

61. The Jajpur correspondent of the *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 18th April states that many passengers drop down at the Dhanmandal and Kenduapada stations of the

Bengal-Nagpur Railway simply to die of plague which they carry with them, at their family houses within a few hours after their arrival. This is looked upon as dangerous to the health of the general public.

UTKALDIPKA.

62. The Puri correspondent of the same paper regrets that the rites in the Puri temple are not observed at regular hours, and that this has proved a cause of annoyance to the general Hindu public in that town.

The management of the Puri temple.

UTKALDIPKA.

63. The same paper regrets to find that chewing betel and smoking cigars have become the order of the day, and that even urchins and schoolboys cannot do without them.

Cigar and betel legislation proposed.

The writer suggests that Legislature should move to the assistance of the society by enacting a provision to the effect that the sale of cigars and betel to young boys and girls be made penal. The writer quotes the law of Tasmania, Bermuda and Prince Edward Islands as a precedent.

UTKALDIPKA.

64. The same paper regrets to observe that the army expenditure in India is enormous and recommends that the number of troops might be considerably reduced without any

Military expenditure in India.

UTKALDIPKA.

detriment to the public interest.

65. The same paper again finds cause to be dissatisfied with the action of the Cuttack police that did not grant passes to the washermen in time, and as a consequence, the

The Cuttack police.

washermen had to celebrate their *patua* nautches without music. The police excuse was that their office was closed and that they could not receive applications for passes during holidays. The writer observes that the police should have made provisions for receiving these applications before enjoying holidays, and points out that the continuing policy of the local police to meddle with the management of public festivals for the past six months has been creating a spirit of discontent among the people, who are becoming more impatient day by day. The writer advises the local public to bring the matter to the notice of Government.

UTKALDIPKA.

66. In noticing a strike among washermen in Puri, which is visited by a large number of pilgrims every day, the same paper points out that this strike has been brought about by the injudicious action of the local author-

Washermen's strike in Puri town.

ities, who drove them away from the sea-side without assigning a convenient place for the carrying of their business. This injudicious and unsympathetic action of the local authorities should at once be brought to the notice of the Commissioner, who is requested to foresee that the wearing of unclean clothes by the general public in Puri may induce plague and other mortal diseases at an early date.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA,

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

Offg. Bengali Translator.

The 2nd May, 1903.